



# The Academy at Bank of America

## Time Management and Prioritization – Resource guide


The Academy is Bank of America’s training and professional development organization dedicated to the growth and success of our local communities and teammates.

[Visit the career events page to sign up for additional professional skills workshops.](#)

[Visit the careers site to apply for a job with Bank of America.](#)

DISCLAIMER: This material is provided “as is,” with no guarantee of completeness, accuracy, timeliness or of the results obtained from the use of this material, and without warranty of any kind, express or implied, including, but not limited to warranties of performance, quality and fitness for a particular purpose. This material should be regarded as general information on this topic.

©2022 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved.

**BANK OF AMERICA**  © 2023 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved.

# Overview

## Description

This **Time Management and Prioritization** guide will serve as a resource to empower learners to manage their time more effectively and prioritize tasks. This guide is ideal for individuals looking to learn why time management and prioritization is an essential skill to learn as they navigate and grow their career.



## Introduction

Effective time management and prioritization is important because it allows you to:

- Overcome procrastination.
- Protect your time and capacity.
- Create a plan to accomplish your goals.
- Avoid burnout.

Time management can be challenging if you are easily distracted, overwhelmed, or don't have a plan. It can be more difficult to manage your time when you have numerous competing priorities. This is where prioritization can help you establish a plan based on the importance or urgency of the task.

This resource guide includes exercises and resources for the following:

- Time management approach.
- Prioritizing important tasks
- Planning to reach goals
- Eliminating procrastination
- Protecting your time

# Time management approach

## Proactive vs. Reactive

Benefits of using proactive thinking:

- Ability to develop plans to avoid potential problems or prevent minor issues from becoming larger problems
- Promotes stability by planning for the future to set goals and ways to achieve them

Benefits of using reactive thinking:

- Ability to solve problems as they occur, taking immediate action to address an issue or solve a problem
- Promotes creativity through developing creative and immediate solutions to solve problems

### Examples of proactive prioritization:

- Managing your day before it begins
- Planning for big projects and tight deadlines
- Saving money for future expenses

### Examples of reactive prioritization:

- Handling immediate family needs
- Responding to social media or text messages
- Addressing unexpected absences

## Journal Activity

**Journaling Activities:** Throughout this resource guide, there will be several journaling activities. Keep a document with all your answers so that you can refer to it as you navigate your career journey.

**Journal prompt:** Think of a time when you were proactive. Write down what you did to plan, what actions were taken and what was the result. Do the same activity for reactive.

# The four Ps of time management

## Overview

There are four key principles to help you focus reactive & proactive thinking when managing your time & life priorities.



## Prioritizing

**Ordering things by importance – determining what’s important to you or the situation.**

A first step to prioritizing is to think about these 4 questions:

- **What** do you want to accomplish?
- **How** do you want to get it done?
- **Why** is it important to you that this gets done?
- **Who** needs to be involved?

Then, ask:

- How do these considerations make a difference in how you prioritize all your to-do’s?

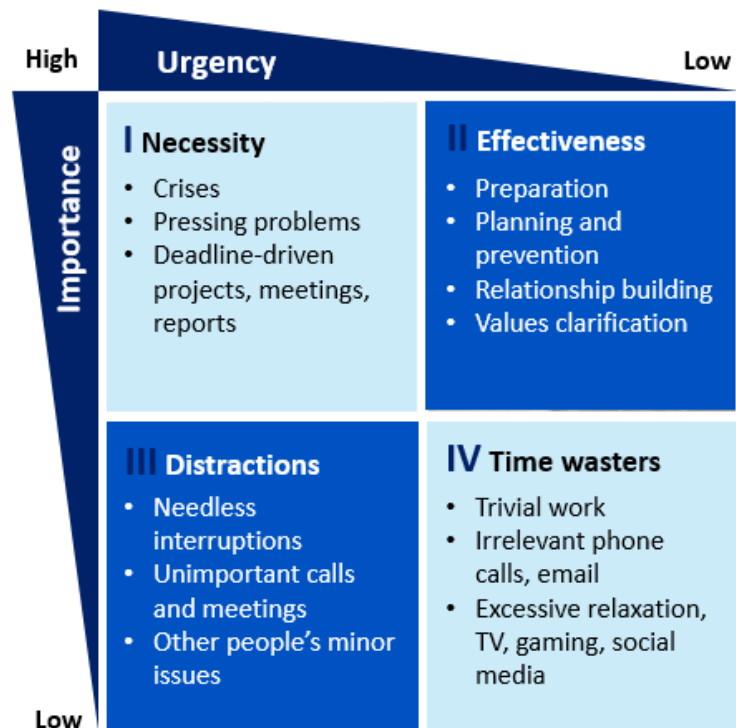


## ABCD prioritization method

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>A</b> Tasks<br><b>Absolutely must get done now</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When accomplished, <b>A</b> tasks yield extraordinary results.</li> <li>• If left undone, may generate serious consequences.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>B</b> Tasks<br><b>Better get done soon</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>B</b> tasks can be postponed, but not for too long.</li> <li>• Within a brief time, they can easily rise to <b>A</b> status.</li> <li>• Not as pressing as <b>A</b> tasks, but still important.</li> </ul>                   |
| <b>C</b> Tasks<br><b>Could wait for now</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>C</b> tasks can be put off, without consequences.</li> <li>• Tasks with time deadlines can easily rise to <b>A</b> or <b>B</b> status.</li> <li>• Tasks that linger here indefinitely may become <b>D</b> status.</li> </ul> |
| <b>D</b> Tasks<br><b>Delegated, requires follow up</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>D</b> tasks rarely have deadlines and can be labelled as nice to do task.</li> <li>• If left undone, may generate serious consequences.</li> </ul>   |

## Urgent/important prioritization method

- **High Urgency** = A time bound pressure to do something now or in the very near future
- **Low Urgency** = No real time bound pressures until a future time
- **High Importance** = Something that will be of direct benefit to the individual or organization
- **Low Importance** = Something of no direct benefit to the individual or organization





**Journal prompt: What method resonates with your style more? Use one of the two methods reviewed above to prioritize a typical day's activities. Reflect on your list and use it to prepare upcoming tasks.**

## Planning

Research shows that for every **one** minute you spend **planning**, you will gain **ten** in **execution**.



Before you can plan anything, you should decide on what you want to accomplish - your **objective**.



**Define** the positive active tasks that will achieve your objective. Think through the sequence in which items should be completed.



**Schedule** when things are going to get done. Time planning ensures that you remain in control of your schedule, not others.

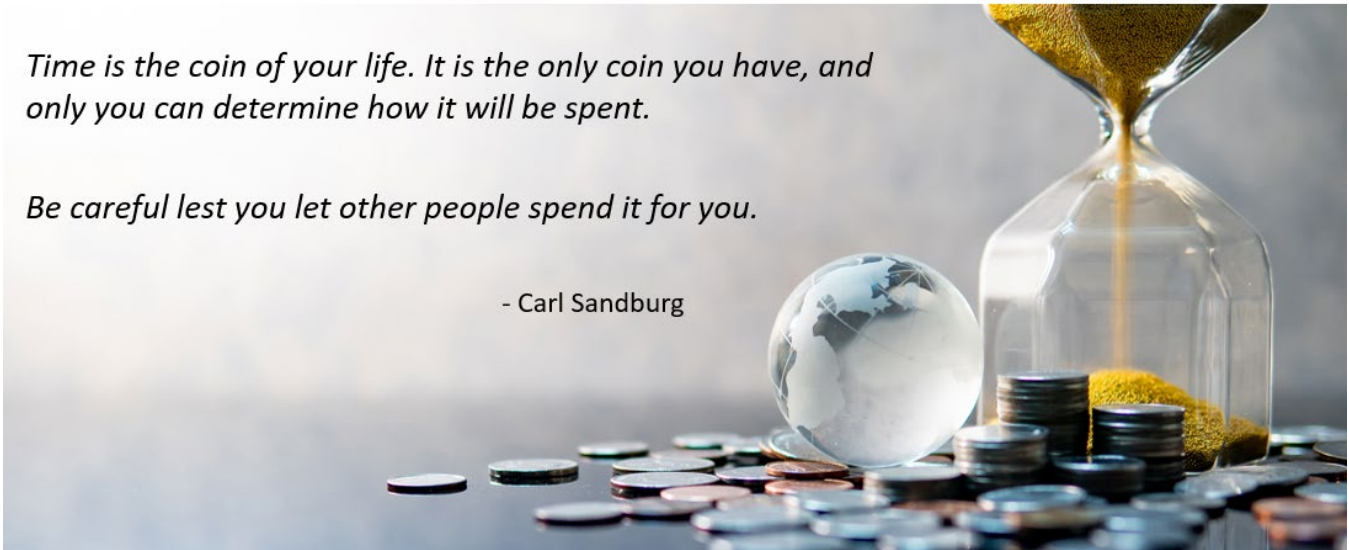
**Journal prompt: Proper prior planning prevents poor performance – what does this statement mean to you? How can you apply it to your life?**

## Protecting your time

*Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent.*

*Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.*

- Carl Sandburg



Time is our most valuable resource even more so than money. You can always earn more money in your life, but you can never get more time.

## The art of saying “no”

Saying “no” is not rude, it simply means that at this time you won’t be able to accommodate the request due to competing priorities or current commitments Use inclusive language.

- Be honest about your capacity with yourself and others.
- Negotiate priorities and due dates.
- Review your schedule.
- Say “**no**” now, but “**yes**” for a time in the future.
- Ask for the request in writing.

## Best practices for protecting your time

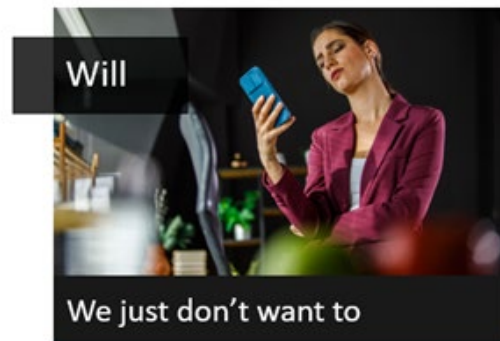
Here are a few best practices for scheduling your time:

- Create to-do lists.
- Prepare for the unexpected by being flexible.
- Find and keep open “free time” on your calendar.
- Check your progress.

## Procrastination

Procrastinating is the act of delaying or postponing doing something.

### Why do we procrastinate?



**Skill** means we don't know, how to do something. The right question to ask to overcome a lack of skill is:

**How can I gain the necessary skill?**

**Will** means we just don't want to do it. Basically, there is no motivation to complete the task. In this situation you need to ask yourself:

**What risks and impacts will happen to my goals if I continue to delay this task?**

## Managing your energy

When you put off doing unpleasant or difficult tasks, leaving them to the end of the day, you may not be managing your energy effectively. There are four different types of energy:

- **Physical** – when your body is too tired or weak to do physical work.
- **Mental** – when your brain seems too tired to focus or concentrate.
- **Emotional** – when you become emotional about a topic to the point it causes fear or panic.
- **Spiritual** – when you feel like you are doing something you were born to do.

### Tips for Managing your Energy

| Physical  | Mental   | Emotional  | Spiritual   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eat right.</li> <li>▪ Get your rest.</li> <li>▪ Exercise.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus.</li> <li>▪ Concentrate.</li> <li>▪ Manage distractions.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Defuse negative emotions.</li> <li>▪ Actively demonstrate random acts of appreciation.</li> <li>▪ Reframe misunderstandings.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Play to your strengths.</li> <li>▪ Find your passion.</li> <li>▪ Know your personal values.</li> <li>▪ Have a sense of purpose and meaning.</li> </ul> |